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Notes and Opinions.

The Memorabilia of Jesus.—This book by Peyton on the Gospel of St. John is reviewed briefly and interestingly by Marcus Dods in the November number of the *Expositor*. Dr. Dods censures certain blemishes of style and errors of taste, and has no sympathy with the author's opinion that all questions of genuineness and authenticity in New Testament study are superfluous. He gives, however, the highest praise to the book. "But after all deductions Mr. Peyton's volume is one which for originality of thought and felicity of expression, for the delight it will bring to its readers, and the stimulus it will give to faith, may be put on a level with the best work of this generation To Mr. Peyton is due the credit of setting Christianity in new relations to nature and of thereby eliciting from each a significance previously hidden But the charm of the book arises not more from its main teaching than from the skill and beauty with which the teaching is given. For Mr. Peyton is not only thoroughly equipped in science, he is a poet as well, and conveys his meaning, not in verse, but in that most flexible and least monotonous of instruments, a prose which has all the swing and terseness and flash of poetry. This blend of science and poetry give its peculiar flavor to the book. There are descriptions of nature equal to anything in Kingsley or in Tyndall, while there are expositions of the spiritual life as searching and appeals as tender and inevitable as the finest passages in Maurice. The volume throughout has that peculiar charm and glamor which only genius imparts. From first to last, one scarcely meets a commonplace thought or a thought expressed in a commonplace way, and on almost every page are sentences which will often be quoted as the first and final expression of important truth. Above all, the entire volume is pervaded by faith, courage, hopefulness, charity, the spirit of power and love and a sound mind."

Some Cases of Possession.—Demonic possession is the subject of a study by Dean Chadwick, in the October number of the *Expositor*. He considers three cases: 1. The Demoniak in the Synagogue. 2. The woman with a spirit of infirmity. 3. The man with a deaf and dumb spirit.

In considering the first case the writer lays stress on the fact of the intense hostility of the evil spirit to Christ, on his knowledge of him as the Holy one of God, and on Christ's severity with the Spirit and absolute authority over him. The whole relation of the two would hardly be explicable were Christ merely healing some disease. The writer argues for a Kingdom of Evil Spirits, a har-

monious league with Satan at its head. This miracle illustrates the cruel usurpation from which Christ has rescued humanity. The attitude of each is that of undisguised hostility.

In the second case the spiritual thralldom was not that of convulsion, but of impotence, of "palsy and a downward gaze." "It is a beautiful and characteristic incident. But it does not add to our knowledge of the phenomena much more than this, that Satanic influence lay behind other diseases than violent and outrageous ones, and experience coincided with theory, in affirming that there was gradation in the wickedness even of fiends, so that one could find seven others more wicked than himself."

In the third case the evil spirit is cast out and there followed not only tranquillity, but the power to speak. As in the first instance presented, the multitude had been struck by the authority that could cast out evil spirits, so here they exclaim: "It was never so seen in Israel." "In two cases, therefore, out of three, we find a distinct recognition by the public of something which differentiated Christ's treatment of possession from anything known before. Miracles were everywhere. It was impossible that he should escape the imputation of what was ascribed to every popular preacher. But in truth his miracles could not amaze the most critical and scientific age more perfectly than they amazed his own." Commenting on the fact that those possessed of evil spirits are usually afflicted with disease for the most part of a nervous type, he says: "Either the fiend causes the disease, or he takes advantage of it. The latter is in some respects the more attractive theory." The writer concludes by affirming that both experience and reason confirm the testimony of the Scriptures as to the existence of evil spirits.

Christ's Sonship to God.—One of the most interesting questions in Biblical Theology is the New Testament conception, expressed or implied, of Christ's sonship to God. We say "implied" because the conception can not be found merely in any one or more explicit statements, but can only be ascertained, as all sayings of Christ, all sayings about Christ, all events of his life, are carefully studied and compared and made to surrender each its own contributing element.

The central importance of this question not only in Biblical Theology, but also for Systematic Theology is indicated by three articles that have recently appeared: one by Pfeiderer, on "The Essence of Christianity" in the *New World* for September; one, an editorial on "The Divinity of Christ" in the *Andover Review* for October; and the last by the late Dr. Samuel H. Giesy, on "Christ's Essential Sonship" in the *Reformed Quarterly Review* for October.

Pfeiderer seeks the essence of Christianity not in the historical development of the Church, though it may be found there, but in the personality of Christ, as disclosed in the New Testament writings, and he finds this essence in the rela-

tion of sonship to God. All admit, says Pfeiderer, that this consciousness of sonship is the characteristic feature of the personality of Jesus, but men would differ in their understanding of this consciousness. Pfeiderer takes the first three Gospels as evidence and asserts that, as witnessed to in them, the consciousness is one that may be common to all men. Jesus called God *His* Father in no other sense than the one in which he taught us to pray "Our Father in Heaven." He admits that Jesus occupies a unique position in that he was the first perfectly to realize this ideal of sonship, but the conception of Jesus as the Christ, as it is presented in the New Testament and found in the early Church, is the result of the influence of Jewish apocalyptic and Hellenistic modes of thought. But may it not be that this Sonship of Christ being a wholly unique relation to God, one realized by no one before or since, needs for its expression words no less pregnant than those of the New Testament and the Nicene creed, and for its interpretation no less a doctrine, modified, it may be, but still essentially the same, than that formulated in the fourth century—the doctrine of the Trinity. Such is the position of the last two articles in which Christ's essential sonship as an eternal relation between himself and the Father is maintained.

The question of fact concerning Jesus' sonship is one thing; of interpretation, another. For the fact we turn to the historical and critical student of the New Testament writings; for its interpretation, in its threefold relation to God, to man and to the world, we turn to the philosopher of the Christian religion. As a fact disclosed through the New Testament writings, what was the nature of Christ's sonship?

The Revised Version.—Under this heading Bishop William Walsham How, in the October *Expositor*, suggests a plan by which the Revised Version may be made more acceptable to English readers. The Revised Version, he asserts, has by no means taken the place it should have taken and that it was expected to take. He attributes this fact to the many unnecessary changes in revision. The revision committee far exceeded the power given them, in this respect, standing in marked contrast to the Old Testament revisers. They were to revise only where "plain and clear errors were found to exist." The Convocation from which the committee derived its authority did "not contemplate any new translation of the Bible or any *alterations of the language* except where, in the judgment of the most competent scholars, *such change is necessary*." When the new version finally appeared it was found to contain "a multitude of minute and unimportant alterations, and by degrees the value of the really important corrections became more and more obscured by the multiplicity of what I fear I must call trivial and unnecessary changes." The book "which was received with so much interest has forfeited its first popularity, and is now comparatively neglected." In the Sermon on the Mount, there are 127 changes, some of which Bishop How characterizes as irritating trivialities, such as: "lift herself up," instead of "lift up herself;" "disbe-

lieved," for "believed not;" "Disciples of Moses," for "Moses' Disciples;" "if there is," for "if there be;" "scoffed at," for "derided;" etc.

Other changes that hardly seem "necessary" are such as the following: "reproach," for "revile;" "a city set on a hill," for "a city that is set on a hill;" "it shineth," for "it giveth light;" "in no wise," for "in no case;" "last," for "uttermost;" "by the heaven," for "by heaven," etc. Notwithstanding his strictures, Bishop How speaks in the highest terms of the work of the revisers so far as it concerns the necessary alterations.

Bishop Ellicott, before the revision, made seventy-five changes in the Sermon on the Mount, the revisers made 127. Bishop How would make only twenty-four.

He commends a suggestion made by the late Dr. Liddon some years ago, that the alterations be reduced so as to be brought within the limits of the original instructions, and that these then be printed in the margin of the text in an edition prepared for reading in Church. He closes his interesting article with these words: "I think at least my readers will agree with me in holding that it would be an inestimable boon if the uncritical and unlearned hearer could listen to the words he has learned to love and revere with more intelligent understanding through the removal of 'plain and clear errors,' whether of reading or of translation, as well as of serious obscurities, without losing his sense of familiarity with the wording and idioms of our old translation, so pure in its diction, so grand in its flowing periods, so priceless in its influence upon all our literature, so faithful in its simplicity, and so dear to thousands and tens of thousands of Christian souls." T. H. R.

It is commonly supposed in this country that English and American theologians are much more conservative than German scholars, less ready to welcome a new opinion and forsake an old. In general no doubt this is true. But a recent remark of Prof. Schürer brings freshly to light, what was indeed by no means unknown before, that in certain lines of thought the Germans exceed English speaking scholars in conservatism. In a review (in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, Oct. 29) of T. K. Abbott's recent volume of *Essays, chiefly on the original texts of the Old and New Testaments*, he says that the two essays on the Hebrew text of the Old Testament "give welcome proof that certain critical views which in Germany still have to struggle for existence, are in conservative England already more and more prevalent." The reason for this apparent anomaly is not far to seek. Relatively speaking English scholars have devoted larger attention to textual criticism, German scholars to historical criticism. Despite the preëminence of the work and name of Tischendorf, Germany has not led in textual criticism. It is an interesting fact that one of the most eminent—perhaps one may say the most eminent—textual critic in Germany to-day is an American, born and educated in this country. The result of the relatively larger attention to matters of textual criticism by English-speaking scholars is that in England and America,

questions of the text of the Bible are viewed with complacency and new views are considered, with critical interest indeed, but without alarm. Indeed though there was a time when the investigations of textual critics were viewed with apprehension it is now clearly recognized that their work has issued not only in producing a purer text, but—scarcely less important—in establishing upon a much firmer basis of evidence that great portion of the text which is left unchanged by the work of textual criticism. It is in part the recognition of this fact that has secured for textual criticism an undisputed place among the Biblical Sciences. There are some signs that what has happened in reference to Textual Criticism is about to happen also in reference to Historical Criticism. Possibly if to German indefatigable toil in investigation, and inexhaustible fertility of imagination there could be added in the work of historical criticism somewhat more of the English and American coolness and sobriety of judgment, this science might the sooner assume the position of real and recognised helpfulness already secured by its allied science of textual criticism.

E. D. B.